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# WO 510 The Servant as Liturgist

Lester Ruth

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Syllabus  
WO510 The Servant as Liturgist  
Fall Semester 2000  
Tu/Th 9:30-10:45 a.m.

**Professor:** Dr. Lester Ruth; BC 218; 858-2175; (email: WO510 Office or lester\_ruth@asburyseminary.edu)

Office hours: 1:15-2:30 Tuesdays and Thursdays; other times by appointment

**Course description:** This course lays the foundation for the ministry of the whole congregation in corporate worship. Biblical, theological, historical and practical focus is brought to bear on the elements of prayer, Scripture, music, and proclamation in terms of the design of services, the keeping of time, and worship space. Attention is given to interpreting, planning and presiding at the Church's principal worship services, sacraments, weddings and funerals.

**Course goals:** This course will seek to equip the student to:

- 1) glorify God and edify the church
- 2) make sound worship decisions
- 3) provide gracious worship leadership
- 4) put herself or himself in context, gaining perspective on her or his own present practice of worship within the diversity of approaches to Christian worship.

**Grading and Evaluation:** Each student will receive a grade based upon three elements: a midterm exam, a final exam, and a contracted level of reading. A numeric grade, which will be translated to letter grades, will be assigned to each element. Students should refer to page 24 in the 1998-2000 ATS catalog to see qualitative descriptions of these letter grades. In this class "A" refers to a numeric grade of 94 and above; "A-" to 90-93; "B+" to 87-89; "B" to 84-86; "B-" to 80-83, and so forth.

--**Exams:** The midterm exam will occur during class on Thursday, October 12. It will cover both class lectures and general required reading up to that point. The final exam is scheduled for Thursday, December 14 from 9:00-11:00 a.m. It will cover lectures and general required reading since from October 17 onward.

--**Reading:** There are three levels of readings for this class: 1) general required which is expected of everyone; 2) a B level of reading (the general required + designated additional reading); and 3) an A level of reading (the general required + additional B level reading + designated additional reading). As noted, everyone should do the general required. Students have the option of contracting for the B level or A level of reading. A listing of the reading for each level, a contract to be turned in on Tuesday, September 12, and checklist are provided below (the checklist is due on the last day of class). Each level of reading will be assigned the following numeric value for assessing the final course grade: General required=75; B=85; and A=95. The checklist is due on the day of the final.

**Additional requirement:** All students should visit one worship service at a church outside of their normal range of experience. The visitation should be done with at least one other student. The professor can make suggestions about churches and services. The visitation does not need be on a Sunday although visiting a church's main service is preferred. Students can use the class folder on the First Class server to find people who join them in a visitation. No written report will be due. Time will be taken on October 26 for discussion of the visitations. (Of course, the visitation should be done before this date.) In the case of utter necessity, videotapes or television can be used. However, this is not nearly as preferable as actual visitation and thus this option must be approved by the professor.

**Reading list:**

--**General required:**

E. Byron Anderson, ed., *Worship Matters*, 2 vols. (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1999). (WMII and II)

*Authentic Worship in a Changing Culture* (Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, 1997). (AWCC)

James F. White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1992). (ICW)

**--B level:**

The general required reading plus the following:

Rob L. Staples, *Outward Sign and Inward Grace: The Place of Sacraments in Wesleyan Spirituality* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1991).

John D. Witvliet, *So You've Been Asked To...Lead a Worship Service* (Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, 1999).

John D. Witvliet, *So You've Been Asked To...Plan a Worship Service* (Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, 1999).

And these articles in the course packet:

Bradshaw, Paul F. *Two Ways of Praying* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), pp. 13-28, 45-72.

Bridge, Donald and David Phypers, *The Water That Divides: The Baptism Debate* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1977), pp. 153-187.

Collins, Dori Erwin and Scott C. Weidler. *Sound Decisions: Evaluating Contemporary Music for Lutheran Worship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1997), 6-7.

Hamilton, Michael S. "The Triumph of the Praise Songs: How Guitars Beat Out the Organ in the Worship Wars." *Christianity Today* 43, 8 (July 12, 1999): 29-35.

Lulofs, Roxane S. "Conflict in the Church: A Time to Confront and a Time to Compromise." *Worship Leader* 9, 2 (March/April, 2000): 24-6.

Ruth, Lester. "The Literature on Liturgical Inculturation as It Relates to the Issue of Worship in North America: An Initial Review." Unpublished essay, 1999.

Von Allmen, Jean-Jacques. "The Theological Meaning of Common Prayer." *Studia Liturgica* 10, 3/4 (1974): 125-136.

Webber, Robert E. *Planning Blended Worship: The Creative Mixture of Old & New* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), pp. 13-49.

**--A level:**

The general required reading plus the B level reading plus the following:

Marva Dawn, *A Royal "Waste" of Time: The Splendor of Worshiping God and Being Church for the World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999).

Gayle Carlton Felton, *By Water and the Spirit: Making Connections for Identity & Ministry* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1997).

Sally Morgenthauer, *Worship Evangelism: Inviting Unbelievers into the Presence of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999).

And **four** of these articles in the course packet:

Jones, Cheslyn, Geoffrey Wainwright, Edward Yarnold, and Paul Bradshaw, eds. *The Study of Liturgy*. Revised edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 565-590.

Lathrop, Gordon W. *Holy People: A Liturgical Ecclesiology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999), pp. 49-71.

Liesch, Barry. *The New Worship: Straight Talk on Music and the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House), pp. 61-85.

Proctor-Smith, Marjorie. *In Her Own Rite: Constructing Feminist Liturgical Tradition* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), pp. 13-35.

Russell, Letty M. "Toward a Trinitarian Language of Hospitality." *The Living Pulpit* 8, 2 (April-June 1999), 26-27.

Von Allmen, Jean-Jacques. "A Short Theology of the Place of Worship." *Studia Liturgica* 3, 3 (1964): 155-171.

White, James F. *Christian Worship in North America* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1997), pp. 103-134.

## Class schedule

Date	Topic	General required reading schedule
Sept. 5	Course intro: the glory of God	
7	How we got here: the Bible and worship	AWCC36-49
12	How we got here: brief history of worship	ICW21-51
14	Where we are now: current diversity	WMI73-79, AWCC14-19
19	Where we should be: theology and norms	AWCC50-75, WMI37-42
21	Saying where we are: vocabulary for assessing and planning worship	AWCC80-102, WMI23-28, 80-92
26	Worship in detail: Time	ICW52-87
28	Worship in detail: Time	
Oct. 3	Worship in detail: Space	ICW88-121, WMI155-167, WMII71-81
5	Worship in detail: Music	WMII47-53, 126-134
10	Worship in detail: Music	WMII29-37, WMII142-147
12	exam	
17	Excursus: children and generational issues	WMII119-125
19	Excursus: worship and evangelism	AWCC20-34, WMI15-22, WMII172-176
24	Worship in detail: Prayer	ICW122-140
26	Worship in detail: Prayer	WMI123-129
	In-class discussion of worship visitation	
31	Worship in detail: Word	ICW141-164, WMI30-36, WMII23-28, 101-110
Nov. 2	Worship in detail: Sacramentality	ICW165-191, WMI43-49
7	Worship in detail: Initiation	ICW191-218, WMII134-141
9	Worship in detail: Initiation	WMI51-56
14	Worship in detail: the Lord's Supper	ICW219-253, WMI137-146
16	Excursus: enriching worship	WMI58-62, 173-176, WMII85-100
28	Excursus: negotiating change	
30	Worship in detail: Ministry to the sick, reconciliation, ordination	ICW254-268, 279-288, WMI147-154
Dec. 5	Worship in detail: Weddings	ICW268-279
7	Worship in detail: Funerals	ICW288-297
14	final exam, 9-11 a.m.	

B and A level reading checklist  
(Remember that these items are not on the exam.)  
**This checklist is due on or before the last class day.**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Read?</u>	<u>suggested reading date</u>
Staples, <i>Outward Sign and Inward Grace</i>	B	_____	early second half of semester
Witvliet, <i>So...Lead a Worship Service</i>	B	_____	by Nov. 2
Witvliet, <i>So...Plan a Worship Service</i>	B	_____	by Nov. 2
Bradshaw <i>Two Ways of Praying</i>	B	_____	by Oct. 26
Bridge/Phypers, <i>The Water That Divides</i>	B	_____	by Nov. 9
Collins/Weidler. <i>Sound Decisions</i>	B	_____	by Oct. 10
Hamilton, "The Triumph of Praise Songs"	B	_____	by Oct. 10
Lulofs, "Conflict in the Church"	B	_____	by Sept. 21
Ruth, "Literature on Liturgical Inculturation"	B	_____	by Oct. 24
Von Allmen, "Meaning of Common Prayer"	B	_____	by Oct. 26
Webber, <i>Planning Blended Worship</i>	B	_____	by Oct. 17
Dawn, <i>A Royal "Waste" of Time</i>	A	_____	first half of the semester
Felton, <i>By Water and the Spirit</i>	A	_____	by Nov. 9
Morgenthaler, <i>Worship Evangelism</i>	A	_____	by Oct. 24
and four of the following:			
Jones et al. <i>The Study of Liturgy</i>	A	_____	by Sept. 21
Lathrop, <i>Holy People</i>	A	_____	by Sept. 19
Liesch, <i>The New Worship</i>	A	_____	by Oct. 10
Proctor-Smith, <i>In Her Own Rite</i>	A	_____	by Sept. 14
Russell, "Toward...Language of Hospitality"	A	_____	by Oct. 31
Von Allmen, "Theology Place of Worship"	A	_____	by Oct. 3
White, <i>Christian Worship in No. Am.</i>	A	_____	by Sept. 12

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **To facilitate discussion**

There are three ways to continue discussion of the issues raised in this class:

- 1) Come by and see the professor, either during his scheduled office hours or by appointment.
- 2) Join in the weekly lunch roundtable on worship. This will be an informal, optional time to talk about whatever the pressing worship issues might be. The discussion will begin with the topics from the closest class periods but will not be limited to those. The roundtable will meet on Fridays at noon in the cafeteria.
- 3) Pay attention to the WO510 Discussion Center on the email system. Interested parties are invited to offer questions to the class, post opinions, or otherwise stir the liturgical waters. The professor will participate but students will **not** be graded on anything they might post. In this course center course materials (such as PowerPoint slides) as well as conferencing, web links, and a chat room will be available on-line through an icon (WO510-LR") placed on each student's desktop, using the Seminary's FirstClass Client program. This means that every student should have access to the Seminary's e-mail system; access is possible through use of computers available on the Wilmore or Orlando campus Media Center, through dialing into the system from a home computer, or via the World Wide Web (and thus through any computer, such as those available at public libraries). To post a message type in WO510-LR into the recipient line (To:) of a message or just hit the new message button while in the WO510-LR folder.

### **The "sequels"**

This class is just a beginning. Consider taking additional WO and MU classes, including, but not limited to, WO 611 Public Worship: Study-Discussion, WO 612 Public Worship: Practicum, and WO 738 Sacramental Theology.

### Visitation Observation Tool

#### I. Time

What day did you visit? When in the day was the service? Was it a regular service or one on a special occasion? Did the service seem to have any sort of relationship with a special time (daily, weekly, or yearly)?

#### II. The worship space

Please draw an elementary sketch of the worship space and label the important spaces (congregational, movement, choir, baptismal, and sanctuary, i.e., altar-table, space) and centers (baptismal font/pool, pulpit, lectern, altar-table, presider's chair, and the normal place of presiding).

#### III. The order of worship

Was a written bulletin/program provided? If so, how closely did the order correspond to what was written? Please reproduce an order of the elements of worship and provide your own grouping of major units. Was there some sort of movement or progression in the service?

#### IV. Music

How much music was there? What type of music was there? By whom was the music performed? Who seemed to be the primary audience for the music? What sort of piety would be formed by this type of music? What function did the music seem to have?

#### IV. Preaching, reading, and praying

How important was the sermon in the service? How would you characterize the sermon? What relationship did it have to the Bible passages which were read?

How many Bible passages were read? How extensive were the readings? Was special respect for the Bible shown? If so, how?

Was the praying from a book or extemporaneously? Who did the praying, the presider, the congregation, or both? What seemed to be common topics of the prayer?

#### V. Persons

What sort of people made up this congregation? How was the service a reflection of their culture?

Who did most of the worship acts? Were there distinctions by age, sex, etc.? How many presiders were there? How could you tell if someone was a presider? Was there one many presider?

#### VI. Symbolic acts, gestures, language, and objects

Were there especially significant symbolic acts, gestures, or objects? If so, what? How could you tell? What seems especially holy or sacred for this congregation?

Was there distinctive terminology or lingo? Were there recurring themes or metaphors? If so, what? Is this distinctive language immediately recognizable in meaning to a visitor?

#### VII. The "purpose" of the service

What seemed to be the "purpose" of the service? Who was the main audience of the things said and done? What was the normal way of addressing this audience?

#### VIII. This service within its tradition

How characteristic of its tradition was this service? What seemed in line with this church's broader tradition? What seemed out of place with this church's tradition?

#### IX. Intangibles

What was the style of this service?

From your observation of this service, what do you think is this congregation's view of God? From your observation of this service, what do you think is this congregation's view of the church?

What are your own personal reaction and impressions of this worship? What else needed to be asked on this observation tool in order to assess correctly this worship service?

What range of emotions or affections were expressed in the service?

How full was the remembrance and proclamation?

Reading Contract  
WO510  
Fall 2000

**To be turned in by September 12.**

I wish to contract to read at this grade level: General    A    B (please circle one)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name:  
(Please print.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



Student Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

I moved here from \_\_\_\_\_

Current church affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Prior church affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Year at ATS: 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> Other

I would characterize my own preference for worship as

\_\_\_\_\_.

My greatest desire for this course is

\_\_\_\_\_.

I think the greatest challenge for the church today with respect to worship is

\_\_\_\_\_.